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Contact Alison Halpern, Executive Secretary 360 902-2053, [ahalpern@agr.wa.gov](mailto:ahalpern@agr.wa.gov) for more information or photos of proposed noxious weeds

**For immediate release**

**State Noxious Weed Control Board sets public hearing to consider changes to the 2014 noxious weed list**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB) will hold a public hearing on Nov. 5 in Wenatchee to take comments on proposed rule-making changes to the 2014 state noxious weed list.

**When: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 5**

**Where: The Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way, Wenatchee, WA 98801.**

**How to comment:**

- Mail written testimony to: WSNWCB; PO Box 42560; Olympia, WA 98504-2560.
- Send comments by email to [noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov](mailto:noxiousweeds@agr.wa.gov).
- Attend the public hearing to provide written or verbal testimony in person.

Written testimony should be submitted by 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 4, 2013. Oral testimony at the hearing will be limited to three minutes per person, with an additional opportunity to speak, if time allows.

The WSNWCB will vote on the proposed rule changes during its regular meeting, at 9 a.m. , Wednesday. Nov. 6, in the same location as the hearing. This meeting is also open to the public.

The WSNWCB has several proposed changes for 2014, including four additions to the noxious weed list. These include:

- Lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*, also known as *Ranunculus ficaria*) a small, low-growing plant of moist areas. Emerging early in the growing season, often before native ephemerals, it can form dense patches that outcompete native plants. Its vegetative reproduction through bulbets and tubers makes it very difficult to control once established. Lesser celandine has been proposed as a Class B noxious weed, which would be designated for control in Snohomish, Skamania, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties.
- Giant reed (*Arundo donax*) is a bamboo-like grass considered highly invasive in many southern states, where it can rapidly colonize and form massive, monotypic stands in riparian (river bank) habitat. However, there is a great deal of interest in this fast-growing plant as a biofuel, and as a sustainable substitute for tree-based paper, flooring and other construction building material, and as reeds for wind instruments. The WSNWCB is considering listing it as a Class B noxious weed, to be designated for control in areas

susceptible to invasion such as rivers, wetlands, and open irrigation waterways. The intent is to support the careful and responsible cultivation of this potential crop while being prepared to control it should it escape into these aquatic systems.

- The WSNWCB is also considering grouping all nonnative cattails (*Typha* species) and their hybrids into one Class C listing. These nonnative wetland plants are considered invasive because they can dominate marshes more aggressively and tolerate deeper water and more flooding than our native cattail (*Typha latifolia*). Because the nonnative cattails and their hybrids look similar to each other, and our native cattail is more easily distinguishable, it is simpler to group the nonnatives together as one noxious weed listing. As a Class C noxious weed, control would not be required by the WSNWCB, though county weed boards may require landowners to control it where it is becoming problematic.
- Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) is common in Eastern Washington and is regarded by many as a nasty tree with thorny branches. Sometimes sold as an ornamental and for use as wind breaks, Russian olive is quite invasive, particularly in riparian habitats, and literally a real pain to work around and/or control. It has been proposed as a Class C noxious weed for 2014, which means that control would not be required by the WSNWCB, though county weed boards may require landowners to control it where it is becoming problematic.
- Japanese eelgrass (*Zostera japonica*) has returned for a third year of deliberation, as it still poses a complicated dilemma in Washington. The WSNWCB had listed Japanese eelgrass as a Class C noxious weed on commercially managed shellfish beds only in 2012 and then adopted a proposal to remove the modification and list it as a Class C noxious weed in 2013. For 2014, the WSNWCB is considering a proposal to reinstate the original listing language of 2012.
- The WSNWCB will also be considering the reclassification of velvetleaf from a Class A noxious weed to a Class B noxious weed and buffalobur from a Class A to a Class C noxious weed, along with several Class B designation changes.
- Finally, the board is proposing to simplify yellow-flowered hawkweed listings. Nonnative hawkweed (*Hieracium*) species can be hard to identify down to species and tell apart, so the board is considering taking its 11 hawkweed noxious weed listings and grouping them into two easier-to-tell-apart subgenus groups.

Visit [www.nwcb.wa.gov/whatsNew.html](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/whatsNew.html) for more information about the listing proposals and how to testify at the hearing.